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In The Claims:

Please replace claim 34 with the following amended claim:


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34. (Amended) A stent constructed from a metal tube, the stent comprising:
- a plurality of interconnected first expansion struts, the first expansion struts forming a first serpentine expansion column having a proximal end region and a distal end region,
 - a plurality of interconnected second expansion struts, the second expansion struts forming a second serpentine expansion column having a proximal end region and a distal end region,
 - a plurality of interconnected third expansion struts, the third expansion struts forming a third serpentine expansion column having a proximal end region and a distal end region,
 - a first connecting strut column comprising a plurality of first connecting struts, each first connecting strut having a first end extending from the distal end region of the first serpentine expansion column, a second end extending from the proximal end region of the second serpentine expansion column and at least one curved region between the first end and the second end of the first connecting strut, the first end of the first connecting strut longitudinally and circumferentially offset from the second end of the first connecting strut,
 - a second connecting strut column comprising a plurality of second connecting struts, each second connecting strut having a first end extending from the distal end region of the second serpentine expansion column, a second end extending from the proximal end region of the third serpentine expansion column and at least one curved region between the first end and the second end of the second connecting strut, the first end of the second connecting strut longitudinally and circumferentially offset from the second end of the second connecting strut.

Please replace claim 35 with the following amended claim:

35. (Amended) The stent of claim 34 wherein the first expansion struts and the first connecting struts are provided in a ratio, the ratio of the first expansion struts to the first connecting struts is 2:1.

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 [Please replace claim 36 with the following amended claim:]

36. (Amended) The stent of claim 34 wherein the first expansion column comprises a plurality of joining struts in the distal end region and a plurality of joining struts in the proximal end region, the second expansion column comprises a plurality of joining struts in the distal end region and a plurality of joining struts in the proximal end region, and each first connecting strut has a first end which extends from a side of one joining strut in the distal end region of the first expansion column and a second end which extends from a side of one joining strut in the proximal end region of the second expansion column.

[Please replace claim 37 with the following amended claim:]

37. (Amended) A stent constructed from a metal tube, the stent comprising:
a plurality of interconnected first expansion struts, the first expansion struts forming a first expansion column having a proximal end region and a distal end region, each first expansion strut connected only at a proximal end to one first expansion strut adjacent thereto and only at a distal end to another first expansion strut adjacent thereto;

a plurality of interconnected second expansion struts, the second expansion struts forming a second expansion column having a proximal end region and a distal end region, each second expansion strut connected only at a proximal end to one second expansion strut adjacent thereto and only at a distal end to another second expansion strut adjacent thereto;

a first connecting strut column comprising a plurality of first connecting struts, each first connecting strut having a first end extending from the distal end region of the first expansion column, a second end extending from the proximal end region of the second expansion column and at least one curved region between the first end and the second end of the connecting strut, the first end of the first connecting strut longitudinally and circumferentially offset from the second end of the first connecting strut.

[Please replace claim 38 with the following amended claim:]

38. (Amended) The stent of claim 37 wherein the first expansion column comprises a plurality of joining struts in the distal end region and a plurality of joining struts in the proximal

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end region, the second expansion column comprises a plurality of joining struts in the distal end region and a plurality of joining struts in the proximal end region,

and each first connecting strut has a first end which extends from a side of one joining strut in the distal end region of the first expansion column and a second end which extends from a side of one joining strut in the proximal end region of the second expansion column.

Please replace claim 39 with the following amended claim:

39. (Amended) A stent constructed from a metal tube, the stent comprising:

a plurality of interconnected first expansion struts, the first expansion struts forming a first serpentine expansion column having a proximal end region and a distal end region,

a plurality of interconnected second expansion struts, the second expansion struts forming a second serpentine expansion column having a proximal end region and a distal end region,

a plurality of interconnected third expansion struts, the third expansion struts forming a third serpentine expansion column having a proximal end region and a distal end region,

a first connecting strut column comprising a plurality of first connecting struts, each first connecting strut having a first end extending from the distal end region of the first expansion column and a second end extending from the proximal end region of the second expansion column and at least one curved portion,

a second connecting strut column comprising a plurality of second connecting struts, each second connecting strut having a first end extending from the distal end region of the second expansion column and a second end extending from the proximal end region of the third expansion column and at least one curved portion;

the first serpentine expansion column, the second serpentine expansion column and the first connecting strut column forming a plurality of geometric cells about the circumference of the stent,

each geometric cell having a proximal region extending between two adjacent first expansion struts, a distal region extending between two adjacent second expansion struts and a middle region extending between two adjacent first connecting struts, the proximal region and the distal region circumferentially offset from one another.

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[Please replace claim 41 with the following amended claim:]

41. (Amended) The stent of claim 40 wherein the first expansion struts and the first connecting struts are provided in a ratio, the ratio of the first expansion struts to the first connecting struts is 2:1.

[Please replace claim 42 with the following amended claim:]

42. (Amended) A stent constructed from a metal tube, the stent comprising a plurality of cells, each of the plurality of cells having substantially the same asymmetrical shape, each of the plurality of cells having a first end portion which extends substantially in a longitudinal direction and a second end portion which extends substantially in a longitudinal direction, the second end portion longitudinally and circumferentially offset from the first end portion, the first end portion connected to the second end portion via a plurality of connecting members each of which has a plurality of curved sections.

Please add new claims 44-50 as follows:

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44. (New) An unexpanded stent constructed from a metal tube, the stent comprising:
a plurality of interconnected first expansion struts, the first expansion struts forming a first expansion column having a proximal end region and a distal end region, each first expansion strut connected at a proximal end to one first expansion strut adjacent thereto by a first proximal joining strut and at a distal end to another first expansion strut adjacent thereto by a first distal joining strut, the first expansion column having a plurality of first proximal corners where each first proximal joining strut and each first expansion strut are connected and a plurality of first distal corners where each first distal joining strut and each first expansion strut are connected;

a plurality of interconnected second expansion struts, the second expansion struts forming a second expansion column having a proximal end region and a distal end region, each second expansion strut connected at a proximal end to one second expansion strut adjacent thereto by a second proximal joining strut and at a distal end to another second expansion strut adjacent thereto by a second distal joining strut, the second expansion column having a plurality of second proximal corners where each second proximal joining strut and each second expansion strut are connected and a plurality of second distal corners where each second distal joining strut and each

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second expansion strut are connected;

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a first connecting strut column comprising a plurality of first connecting struts, each first connecting strut having a first end extending from one of the plurality of first distal corners of the distal end region of the first expansion column, a second end extending from one of the plurality of second proximal corners of the proximal end region of the second expansion column and at least one curved region between the first end and the second end of the connecting strut, the first end of the first connecting strut connecting to the first expansion column at a location which is longitudinally and circumferentially offset from a location at which the second end of the connecting strut connects to the second expansion column.

41. (New) The stent of claim 44 wherein the first expansion column comprises a plurality of loops in the distal end region and a plurality of loops in the proximal end region, the second expansion column comprises a plurality of loops in the distal end region and a plurality of loops in the proximal end region, and each first connecting strut has a first end which extends from a side of one loop in the distal end region of the first expansion column and a second end which extends from a side of one loop in the proximal end region of the second expansion column.

46. (New) A stent constructed from a metal tube, the stent comprising:

a plurality of interconnected first expansion struts, the first expansion struts forming a first expansion column having a proximal end region and a distal end region, each first expansion strut connected at a proximal end to one first expansion strut adjacent thereto by a first proximal joining strut and at a distal end to another first expansion strut adjacent thereto by a first distal joining strut, the first expansion column having a plurality of first proximal intersections where each first proximal joining strut and each first expansion strut are connected and a plurality of first distal intersections where each first distal joining strut and each first expansion strut are connected;

a plurality of interconnected second expansion struts, the second expansion struts forming a second expansion column having a proximal end region and a distal end region, each second expansion strut connected at a proximal end to one second expansion strut adjacent thereto by a second proximal joining strut and at a distal end to another second expansion strut adjacent

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thereto by a second distal joining strut, the second expansion column having a plurality of second proximal intersections where each second proximal joining strut and each second expansion strut are connected and a plurality of second distal intersections where each second distal joining strut and each second expansion strut are connected;

a first connecting strut column comprising a plurality of first connecting struts, each first connecting strut having a first end extending from a location immediately adjacent to one of the plurality of first distal intersections of the distal end region of the first expansion column, a second end extending from a location immediately adjacent to one of the plurality of second proximal intersections of the proximal end region of the second expansion column and at least one curved region between the first end and the second end of the connecting strut, the first end of the first connecting strut longitudinally and circumferentially offset from the second end of the first connecting strut.

47. (New) An unexpanded stent constructed from a metal tube, the stent comprising:

a plurality of interconnected first expansion struts, the first expansion struts forming a first expansion column having a proximal end region and a distal end region, each first expansion strut connected at a proximal end to one first expansion strut adjacent thereto and at a distal end to another first expansion strut adjacent thereto;

a plurality of interconnected second expansion struts, the second expansion struts forming a second expansion column having a proximal end region and a distal end region, each second expansion strut connected at a proximal end to one second expansion strut adjacent thereto and at a distal end to another second expansion strut adjacent thereto;

a first connecting strut column comprising a plurality of first connecting struts, each first connecting strut having a first end extending from the distal end region of the first expansion column at a location in closer proximity to one first expansion strut than to any other of the plurality of first expansion struts, a second end extending from the proximal end region of the second expansion column at a location in closer proximity to one second expansion strut than to any other of the plurality of second expansion struts and at least one curved region between the first end and the second end of the connecting strut, the first end of the first connecting strut longitudinally and circumferentially offset from the second end of the first connecting strut.

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48. (New) An unexpanded stent constructed from a metal tube, the stent having a longitudinal axis comprising:

a plurality of interconnected first expansion struts, the first expansion struts forming a first expansion column having a proximal end region and a distal end region, each first expansion strut connected at a proximal end to one first expansion strut adjacent thereto and at a distal end to another first expansion strut adjacent thereto;

a plurality of interconnected second expansion struts, the second expansion struts forming a second expansion column having a proximal end region and a distal end region, each second expansion strut connected at a proximal end to one second expansion strut adjacent thereto and at a distal end to another second expansion strut adjacent thereto;

a first connecting strut column comprising a plurality of first connecting struts,

each first connecting strut having a first end extending from a first location at the distal end region of the first expansion column, the first end extending in a direction non-parallel to the longitudinal axis of the stent,

a second end extending from a second location at the proximal end region of the second expansion column, the second location circumferentially and longitudinally offset from the first location, the second end extending in a direction non-parallel to the longitudinal axis of the stent,

and at least one curved region between the first end and the second end of the connecting strut.

49. (New) An unexpanded stent constructed from a metal tube, the stent comprising:

a plurality of interconnected first expansion struts, the first expansion struts forming a first expansion column having a proximal end region and a distal end region, each first expansion strut connected at a proximal end to one first expansion strut adjacent thereto and at a distal end to another first expansion strut adjacent thereto;

a plurality of interconnected second expansion struts, the second expansion struts forming a second expansion column having a proximal end region and a distal end region, each second

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expansion strut connected at a proximal end to one second expansion strut adjacent thereto and at a distal end to another second expansion strut adjacent thereto;

33 a first connecting strut column comprising a plurality of first connecting struts, each first connecting strut having a first end extending from the distal end region of the first expansion column at a location in closer proximity to one first expansion strut than to any other of the plurality of first expansion struts,

each first connecting strut including a first end which is connected to the first expansion strut column and which extends in a longitudinal direction toward the second expansion column and in a circumferential direction away from the two first expansion struts nearest to the first end, the connecting strut including a portion which extends in a longitudinal direction toward the second expansion column and in a circumferential direction toward the two first expansion struts nearest to the first end of the connecting strut.

5(i). (New) An unexpanded stent constructed from a metal tube, the stent comprising:

a plurality of interconnected first expansion struts, the first expansion struts forming a first expansion column having a proximal end region and a distal end region, each first expansion strut connected at a proximal end to one first expansion strut adjacent thereto and at a distal end to another first expansion strut adjacent thereto;

a plurality of interconnected second expansion struts, the second expansion struts forming a second expansion column having a proximal end region and a distal end region, each second expansion strut connected at a proximal end to one second expansion strut adjacent thereto and at a distal end to another second expansion strut adjacent thereto;

a first connecting strut column comprising a plurality of first connecting struts, each first connecting strut having a first end extending from the distal end region of the first expansion column at a location in closer proximity to one first expansion strut than to any other of the plurality of first expansion struts,

each first connecting strut including a first end portion which is connected at a first location to the first expansion strut column and which extends away from the two first expansion struts which are nearest thereto, the entirety of the first end portion offset circumferentially from the first expansion struts which are adjacent to the one expansion strut,